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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this report is twofold: (1) to increase understanding of what is involved in the process of supervision and (2) to help instructional personnel analyze supervisory behavior by means of guiding principles based on knowledge of human behavior examined in light of educational objectives. In the text, rural situations have been selected which show supervisors at work helping teachers and others deal with problems. In keeping with this, approaches designed to improve supervisory practices are illustrated. Also included is a discussion of guiding principles of good supervision and the application of these principles in improving learning opportunities for children and youth. (LS)

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supervision in rural schools

A Report on Beliefs and Practices

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By Jane Franseth
Specialist in Rural Education

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
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FOREWORD

MANY PEOPLE ARE HELPING TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY of rural education in the United States in order to provide better education for country children and youth. This publication reports the beliefs of many educators about the kind of supervision or leadership that is most effective, the guiding principles which they consider important, and some practices which illustrate the principles. It also includes some reports on ways used to appraise the effectiveness of supervision.

The appreciation of the Office of Education is gratefully extended to the many supervisors, principals, superintendents, classroom teachers, college professors, and State department of education consultants who helped to make this study possible.

HELEN K. MACKINTOSH, *Chief*
Elementary School
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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

THE IMPORTANCE OF WELL-INFORMED, EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL leadership throughout the Nation's schools is recognized. However, particular problems involved in the development of qualities and skills essential to effective instructional leadership are not so easy to identify, understand, or solve.

Supervision in Rural Schools—A Report of Beliefs and Practices, published originally in 1955, has two main purposes: First, to increase understanding of what is involved in the process of supervision; second, to help instructional personnel analyze supervisory behavior by means of guiding principles based on knowledge of human behavior examined in light of educational objectives. Through a few examples from rural situations showing supervisors at work helping teachers and others deal with problems, a particular approach designed to improve supervisory practices is illustrated.

The 1955 edition of this bulletin has served as a study guide for groups concerned about the development of competency in the area of instructional leadership. It has been used in institutes, workshops, seminars, university and college programs, and conferences developed by groups in State departments of education, local schools, professional associations, and institutions of higher education. It is hoped that this edition will serve a similar purpose.

Although examples show supervisors at work in rural situations, many of the questions asked and problems faced by personnel in rural areas are similar to those of personnel in urban situations. Also important to realize is that situations vary within a school system or State and throughout the Nation. Examples most easily identified as rural deal with problems of helping: teachers to teach in classrooms of two-teacher schools; a staff to plan a

curriculum in a six-teacher school; a school to develop an instructional program to reduce incidence of a particular disease in the community; a group of children and their teacher to study possible ways of getting a safe supply of drinking water in their school; and a community to develop a preschool program for culturally disadvantaged children in depressed areas. Problems such as these, however, are not necessarily unique to rural America.

The guiding principles of supervision, if understood by the instructional leaders, are applicable to any problems anywhere. However, to help provide a frame of reference for a study of supervision in relation to a variety of rural school situations today, this 1965 edition of the bulletin includes recent information about rural education today. Also included in the 1965 revision are reports of recent research studies on guiding principles to improve learning opportunities for children and youth.

Rural Education Today

The changing nature of what has traditionally been labeled rural is so great that in many respects old and familiar terms are no longer appropriate. Since many aspects of rural and urban life are similar, it is difficult to determine if a specific definition of *rural* is any longer useful. It can be assumed, however, that somewhere in the range between metropolitan areas and vast areas of sparse population and relative isolation what we regard as urban ends and rural begins.[1] Rural education may be defined in a general way as that part of American education which is located in areas lying outside of urban centers or places having 2,500 or more inhabitants.[2] The 1960 census showed 30 percent of the total population classified as rural—7 percent rural farm, 23 percent rural nonfarm.[3] Approximately 15 million children between the ages of 5 and 17 (34 percent of the total population) were classified as rural: 9 percent rural farm and 25 percent rural nonfarm.[4]

The declining rural population of recent years and the development of modern technology have contributed to a widely shared assumption that most, if not all, rural-urban differences have been eliminated. Although educational opportunities for many rural

[1] Adapted from Department of Rural Education, *Rural Education Today.* Washington: The Department, National Education Association, p. 1.

[2] Walter H. Gaumnitz. *Small Schools Are Growing Larger, A Statistical Appraisal.* Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, September 1959, p. 2

[3] Based on data obtained from *U.S. Population Summary, Detailed Characteristics,* Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office 1960, table 155.

[4] Ibid., table 165.

children are equal to those for urban children, some of the facts identified in the rural-urban situation indicate that on the average rural children and youth are at a disadvantage in comparison with urban children and youth. Especially serious is the long-term deprivation among identifiable, visible types of rural families. Spanish-American migrants, Negroes, sharecroppers, farm laborers and rural industrial workers, Indians on and off reservations, and mountain whites—whether from the Appalachians, Ozarks, Cascades, in fact, anywhere back in the hollows, up the creeks, and in the back waters of American society—share common problems and generally lack spokesmen on their behalf.[5]

School situations vary widely among as well as within States. The kind and quality of educational opportunities in some rural situations are comparable to the best provided in urban areas—good school programs, well-qualified teachers, good physical facilities, adequate and up-to-date instructional materials, access to specialized services of various kinds, high quality administrative and supervisory services, and opportunities for inservice education of school personnel.

In other situations, educational opportunities for rural children and youth, both in amount and quality, are limited. Many tasks remain unfinished. Fully qualified teachers, administrators, and other personnel are in short supply. Millions of disadvantaged persons in rural areas have educational standards below any acceptable standard. The role of the community school and the intermediate administrative unit need to be defined. And an adaptation of instruction to the needs and experiences of the children taught is a goal yet to be achieved in many schools.[6]

Office of Education[7] figures for 1964–65 show 13,333 one-teacher schools. Almost all States have some one-teacher schools; some have many more than others. States having more than 500 one-teacher schools are: Kentucky, West Virginia, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Montana, and Puerto Rico. Although many schools are still small, schools in rural areas are growing larger. In 1959, Gaumnitz[8] found the average instructional staff for the rural elementary school was 3.7; for the rural secondary schools, 8.7. The typical rural elementary

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[5] Lee G. Burchinal. "Rural Youth Career Choice in an Urban Society," Adapted from a report, *Resume of Program*. International Committee on Children and Youth, Feb. 11, 1964, p. 1.

[6] *Rural Education Today*, op. cit., p. 1–2.

[7] Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. *Digest of Educational Statistics*. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965 (in press).

[8] Gaumnitz, op. cit., p. 9–10.

school staff is now between five and eight. However, a staff of 15, 20, or 30 teachers in consolidated schools is not uncommon in many communities throughout rural America.

New problems are emerging: School district reorganization and school bus operation have become big city and urban as well as rural concerns involving increasingly greater need for cooperation among rural and urban administrators; population mobility has implications for every community; and extending the increasing variety of specialized educational services to all schools and all communities requires new approaches in organization and implementation.

This publication suggests the many different environments in which rural supervisors work. It highlights some of the special tasks and problems they face. It also cautions that a practice described here may be successful in one rural community but not in another, or applicable to both a rural and an urban community. Whatever their application, the practices and guiding principles are intended ultimately to help give children in rural schools a better education than they otherwise would receive.

Chapter II

WHAT IS GOOD SUPERVISION?

Background

THE FUNCTION OF SUPERVISION is to help schools do their work better. Systematic appraisal of objectives and procedures in supervision is continually pointing the way to more effective methods of accomplishing this purpose. The typical supervisor used to spend much time rating teachers, reporting their strengths and weaknesses, and trying to persuade or coerce them into following certain prescribed practices. Because educators have become dissatisfied with the outcomes of this kind of supervision, many of them are seeking more effective ways of bringing about improvement in supervisory practices. Although the educators who participated in this study expressed many differences of opinion, most of them believe that good school supervision is a consultant and leadership service that schools use to help provide better learning situations for children and adults in their communities. The general aim of education, they agree, is the development of intelligent, responsible citizens concerned about the welfare of all people. Good supervision furthers progress toward this end. It may be provided by a principal, a superintendent, a supervisor,[1] or any other person who accepts responsibility for the improvement of instruction.

This publication reports the beliefs of many educators about supervision, the principles upon which there is most agreement, and some practices in rural school supervision that illustrate the principles. It also includes some reports on ways to appraise the effectiveness of supervision.

[1] The word "supervisor" refers to any person who has leadership responsibility to improve instruction. Other titles are consultant, helping teacher, supervising teacher, director of instruction, curriculum coordinator, specialist, and supervising principal. In some rural areas, the superintendent is the only supervisor.

How Information Was Secured

Many educators in the United States have contributed to this bulletin: teachers, supervisors, principals, college teachers, State department consultants, county and rural area superintendents, deans of education, and specialists in the Office of Education. Through correspondence, work conferences, individual interviews, observing supervisors at work, research studies, and committee work, they have answered the questions: What is good supervision? What are the guiding principles? What are some of the best supervisory practices in rural areas? How can the effectiveness of supervision be appraised?

To begin this search for information, the writer took advantage of many opportunities to learn what supervisors believed to be good supervision. After taking part in many discussions and serving as consultant in many work conferences, she prepared some statements on supervision which appeared to be in harmony with the major beliefs of the educational leaders with whom she had been working. These statements were discussed with a number of educational leadership groups.[2]

Through individual conferences and correspondence, the writer also asked selected persons to comment on the statements. These persons included at least one consultant in each State department of education, authors of recent books, college professors, county and rural area superintendents, county school supervisors, and principals in 21 States.[3]

A few county supervisors obtained opinions on the statements from about 150 classroom teachers in Wisconsin, Georgia, Maryland, New Jersey, and West Virginia.

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[2] Connecticut Supervisors' Association; Wisconsin Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development; Florida County School Supervisors' Association; a South Carolina workshop on supervision; a Texas workshop on supervision; National Conference of County and Rural Area Superintendents; a child study workshop at the University of Maryland; West Virginia Supervisors' Association; a workshop for rural teachers at the University of Minnesota; Cooperative Project on Educational Administration in Tennessee and West Virginia; Tennessee Supervising Teachers' Association; a University of North Carolina workshop on supervision; work conferences for county school superintendents in Kansas; New Jersey Elementary School Workshop; Michigan State Helping Teacher Workshop; Georgia Supervisors' Association; a South Dakota county school superintendents' conference; a conference of county school superintendents in North Dakota; Alabama Supervisors' Association; Southern States Work Conference; Iowa County School Supervisors' Work Conference; a University of Kentucky workshop on leadership; principals' study meetings in Prince Georges County and Howard County, Maryland; a State conference of county school superintendents in Pennsylvania; Virginia Supervisors' Association; a conference of supervisors in Puerto Rico; and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and the Department of Rural Education of the National Education Association.

[3] Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

An Office advisory committee made up of specialists in elementary, secondary, higher, and vocational education, school administration, guidance, and library services also made suggestions.

The following summary expresses the hopes and expectations of teachers and supervisors:

What Is Good Supervision?

Good supervision lifts our sights and helps the school fulfill its responsibilities for helping children and adults improve the quality of living. It helps us develop a realistic sense of confidence in our abilities. It helps us change our perception in the light of careful and cooperative analysis of facts. It helps us get satisfaction from productive change. It fosters a climate conducive to learning and gives us courage to try new and better ways of doing things. It helps us feel that we are not working alone; we are partners in big and important undertakings. Helpful supervision reduces tension. It helps us experience a feeling of warmth, friendliness, and understanding.

Good supervision helps us solve problems that seem important to us. It may also help us see other problems; but until we think they are important, it is doubtful that attempts to help us make much difference. Unsolicited or unwanted advice does not usually produce change.

Helping us to know and understand the findings of research about human development and their application in relationship to the problems we face is good supervision. Although we believe teachers can do a better job with their children if they are encouraged to use their own judgment about the particular methods they use, good supervision helps to make these judgments better. It helps us keep informed about research findings and the experiences of others concerning the ways in which children learn, ways to provide desirable curriculum experiences, how to cooperate with parents, and how to appraise the results of our work. It should be remembered, however, that teachers can make better use of such service if it is provided in response to their requests and if they have a part in deciding how and when it should be given.

To provide help that supervisors think teachers should use, merely because the supervisors believe they need it, does not lead to effective ways of bringing about desirable changes in a school. Help is useful only to the extent that people see it as valuable in relationship to their interests and if they can feel reasonably confident that it will not cause their own self-esteem to be lowered.

Good supervision helps us to use scientific ways of thinking about our problems. It makes us unwilling to accept opinions not supported by facts. Supervisors often supply and interpret the facts necessary to intelligent judgments and suggest solutions to problems. With effective supervision the way is clear for all concerned to contribute their ideas.

Use of scientific ways of thinking and acting is important for several reasons. The most obvious one is that judgments are more

likely to be sound if they are based on careful study of facts and especially if several people help. Cooperative study of facts followed by interpretation is itself a process which increases understanding and learning. People are more likely to act wisely if they help to do the studying and help to decide on the action. Merely trying to follow requirements or suggestions of supervisors does not usually produce intelligent action or provide for the best learning opportunities for children. Active and cooperative participation in making schools better is a way of learning more effective and productive ways of helping children and adults live and learn.

If supervision lifts our sights and helps the school fulfill its responsibilities for helping children and adults improve the quality, outcomes like the following can be expected: Increased concern for the welfare of all people; better physical and emotional health; more skill in the use of reading, language, numbers, and scientific methods of working; more understanding of social issues; more appreciation of music, art, and literature; more use of creative powers; more skill in human relations; and more skill in working together toward the solution of common problems.

This publication reports the beliefs on supervision of many educational leaders throughout the United States, but it is not intended to speak for all supervisors. It represents a consensus, including major differences in beliefs, of several hundred educators who are active in the organizations and groups referred to earlier, and of consultants in State departments of education. This chapter is a summary of their answers to the two questions: What is good supervision? and What are the guiding principles?

Another way used to get information for this study was to invite several rural supervisors, principals, and State department consultants in different sections of the United States to submit descriptions of some of their practices in supervision. Practices described by the participants in the study and some of those observed by the writer are reported in chapter II. They illustrate the principles upon which there is most agreement. Descriptions of ways used to appraise supervision are reported in chapter III.

Guiding Principles

Good supervision helps schools do their work better. The specific ways in which this service is provided vary widely, depending on the particular skills and competencies of the supervisors, the needs of the situation, and the individual differences of the people with whom the supervisors work. However, there is considerable agreement on the guiding principles of supervision. Most of the educators participating in this study say that supervision is most

effective in helping to provide better learning situations for pupils when:

1. It contributes significantly to the solution of problems considered important by the teachers as well as the supervisors,
2. The teachers help decide what the supervisory service should be,
3. Supervision is successful in providing an atmosphere of acceptance, support, and understanding, and
4. Supervision fosters a scientific approach to a study of problems.

Application of Principles

The most effective supervisor, many educators believe, does not prescribe what teachers should do. The authority which he accepts as most useful is that which he earns because people value what he does to help them do a better job. He may tell teachers what he thinks would help solve a problem, but he doesn't expect them to follow his advice unless they believe he is right. Sometimes he and the teachers study the facts related to a problem, and together they decide on action, each accepting responsibilities for getting a job done.

Several reports adapted from records of supervisors help to illustrate the kind of supervision which many of the participants believe most useful in improving teaching practices.

> For several months, the teachers in the Stoney Creek School had been studying ways of using a variety of materials on a wide range of reading levels so as to meet individual differences of their pupils and to provide a richer environment for learning.
>
> The supervisor had been helping the teachers study the problems involved. The study included selection of new social studies textbooks. The advantages and disadvantages of using several different books were discussed. Some teachers thought they could make better adjustment to individual differences if a few copies of each of three or four texts could be made available. Others preferred using one text for the whole class.
>
> It was not possible for the supervisor to attend all of the meetings of this study group, but she accepted the invitation to participate when the teachers asked her to help them choose a new series of social studies books. It appeared now that the idea of choosing several different books instead of one had been discarded. The teacher chairman had asked her to give the staff her appraisal of each of three series which they were considering and to tell them which one she liked best.
>
> The supervisor agreed to do this and told the staff what she knew about the three series which they were considering. As she concluded

her appraisal, she said, "It appears that you have decided to choose just one book. I recall that at one time you talked about selecting 3 or 4 texts instead of 35 copies of the same book."

Several of the teachers looked puzzled, but one of them said, "We talked about that, but we didn't think the administration would give us permission to order several different texts, so we gave it up."

The supervisor responded that she was not sure either, but if the teachers thought the idea worth considering, she would be glad to find out what the superintendent thought about it.

The example illustrates supervision as a service centered on a problem of concern to the teachers and the supervisor. The supervisor was a resource member of the group, helping to supply the facts and to study them. All who were involved had a part in deciding action. The supervisor helped to provide an atmosphere of support and understanding.

Here is another example of supervision as a service based on the problems of interest to teachers. Notice especially what the supervisor did to become better informed about a situation, what she did to help one teacher gain self-confidence, and in another situation how she provided information. The report is an adaptation of a diary written by a county supervisor.

The primary teacher asked for help in teaching reading. The second- and third-graders were slow in reading, she told me. I wondered if the children were actually reading on a lower level than they should be or whether the teacher was expecting all children to reach the same standard. In my early days of supervision, I would have immediately offered a remedy for a problem like this, but I now believe that a supervisor can often provide better help if she isn't too quick to give advice. Until I could get more facts, I decided I could contribute most to the teaching of reading in this situation by helping the teacher release the pressure on herself.

"Well, maybe together we can decide on something that might help," I said. "May I observe the children while you go on with your work? If I get clues, I will be glad to tell you what I think." The teacher gave me permission to do this and asked if I would pay particular attention to Donald, Pete, and Susie.

I spent the next 40 minutes observing the children. It seemed to me they were getting along very well. Later, when the teacher and I found time to talk, it wasn't necessary for me to say much. She knew quite a bit about the children, and her plans for helping them seemed to be well worked out. As we talked she relaxed and appeared to lose much of her nervous tension. Discussing her problems seemed to give her new confidence in herself. I told her I thought the children were doing as well as we could expect them to do and that she seemed to be doing as much as could be expected of her. Although I didn't give this teacher any ideas about teaching reading, I felt that I had made an important contribution to the teaching of reading that day. I had helped to relieve an anxious teacher of some of her tension. I

think this helped her remove some of the pressure she was putting on the children. "Listening" is very often an important supervisory activity. In my opinion, it was especially useful today.

Next, I visited the upper-grade children. They were studying their local water problem. The community was having difficulty getting water that was safe for drinking. The teacher had asked me to help study their situation. I brought with me some reference material on purification of water. I told the children about the methods of purifying water in the nearby water station and suggested that they might want to visit it. Some of the children thought that their community might have a purifying station some day.

I was pleased to give the teacher and children encouragement about using the problem-solving approach in finding answers to questions of importance to them in their community. During a later visit to this school, I heard the children report on their findings about the water situation and what the community might do to provide a safer supply of water. It was good to learn that several members of the community had also helped in this study. Children, parents, the teacher, and the supervisor are learning to use a scientific approach to a study of problems.

Agreement on Principles Not Complete

Although most of the participants in the study agree on the guiding principles of supervision, some had reservations and questions.

Is supervision always most effective when it contributes to the solution of problems or accomplishment of goals that are recognized as important by the teachers? Not all of the participants in the study believe that the answer is "yes." Some of them doubt, for example, whether all teachers know they have problems that are important in relation to the improvement of education for their pupils. Furthermore, some teachers may not want to discuss them with supervisors. Some participants believe that supervisors cannot afford to wait for such teachers to recognize problems. The principle cannot be applied in all situations, they say.

Some participants are also troubled about expecting the teacher to help decide what the supervisor should do. "Should we just wait until teachers ask us to visit schools? If we visit schools only on invitation, what about the people who may need help but never request it?" they ask. One supervisor answers questions like these in this way:

> Effective supervision is not a "waiting-to-be-invited" kind of process. Both teachers and supervisors should have a part in deciding what needs to be done and why. The best results usually come when everyone involved helps decide what problems need study and what the action should be. It is not a responsibility to be taken by either the supervisor or the teacher alone.

Another example may help to clarify the idea of supervision as a service in cooperative efforts to solve problems of concern to teachers. In a county teachers' meeting the supervisor said,

> At the last planning committee meeting, we studied the suggestions that you submitted on the problems of teaching reading. Since then you have had meetings with your principal to consider the recommendations made by the planning committee. I don't know how you feel, but after attending many of these meetings I am encouraged by what's happening. I should like to visit the classrooms next month to give whatever help I can, and to keep myself informed about our practices in teaching reading. I've written a tentative schedule for my visits on the board. Will you tell me what you think of it?

A few of the participants in this study asked questions on the use of the scientific approach in supervision. To one person it seemed unnecessary to discuss it because the need for using it was obvious. "What other approaches are there?" he asked. Another person thought that the word "scientific" in relation to supervision was unrealistic and that scientific methods could not be used in the solution of everyday problems. One person said that the words "scientific method" should be reserved for use in studies of problems where "pretty firm data" could be found to support what was said. In general, however, the participants seem to agree that the scientific approach to problems is possible and appropriate in supervision. Action based on adequate information is always important, they said. Effective supervisors act on the basis of adequate data as much as possible. On the other hand, this does not mean that every person needs to go through all the steps of the scientific method each time he is confronted with a problem. Among other things, the extent of exploration necessary will depend on the need, the possibilities, and the quality and kinds of answers already available.

A few of the participants in the study questioned the emphasis on the principle of providing an atmosphere of support and acceptance. "Shouldn't the leader do more than this?" asked one of them. "Do you mean that it is an achievement when people have not been put on the defensive?" asked another. One person questioned the use of such statements in the supervisor's reports as: "I will be glad to help." "I don't think I have any ideas at the moment." "If you think of ways I can help. . . ." In his opinion, statements like these tend to make supervision purposeless and superficial. "They may merely be the results of trying to supervise without a hint of dictation or domination," he said.

More discussion of the activities involved in providing an atmosphere of support and acceptance in supervision may be necessary

to insure accurate reporting. However, only a few of the participants commented unfavorably on this principle. The others apparently accepted it. But the strongest supporters appear to agree that "avoidance of putting people on the defensive" is one of the elements that should be considered in providing a climate of acceptance and support. It should also be noted, however, that it may be the extent to which people are put on the defensive that makes the difference. Discussion of controversial issues should be encouraged, but when people are on the defensive to the extent that self-protection seems paramount, they often become unable to look at facts or to accept new suggestions for thinking and action. In such instances, energy which might otherwise be used for constructive action is often dissipated. This is the opinion expressed by some of the supporters of the principle that supervision is most effective when it helps people experience feelings of worth, support, and understanding.

Some people question the use of the word "supervisor." They believe that consultant, resource person, or coordinator is more in keeping with the kind of assistance which schools should get. Some, on the other hand, believe that changing the name is not nearly as important as providing the kind of service which is in harmony with good principles.

In the opinion of some, the terms "supervisor" and "consultant" should not be used synonymously because supervisors, they believe, should be given more power to direct teachers than is generally given to consultants. One part of the supervisor's task is to provide consultant service, but this is only part of the job, they say.

Who does the supervising? This is another question which was asked by some of the participants. Although many of the ideas and examples included in this study have been slanted toward the work of the general supervisor, much of the kind of leadership service discussed is often provided by principals, superintendents, special supervisors, and teachers. Who provides the supervision depends very much on the competencies of the personnel available and the kind of assistance that is needed.

Summary

Though they are not in complete agreement, most of the participants in this study believe that good supervision is a resource, consultant, and leadership service which contributes significantly to the solution of problems which teachers consider important. It is most effective when teachers have a part in deciding what the

supervisor should do; when it provides an atmosphere of acceptance, support, and understanding; and when a scientific approach to a study of problems is used.

For Further Study

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Chapter III

SUPERVISORS AT WORK

SUPERVISORS WORK IN CLASSROOMS, in staff meetings, in group conferences, in the office, in workshops, in the community, and in State and national organizations. They work with the teachers, administrators, supervisors, lay citizens, and others to help improve learning experiences for children and adults. Among their activities are observing and participating in classroom activities; serving as consultant, participant, or discussion leader in meetings; helping teachers understand children; interpreting and using the findings of research on human development and the learning process; participating in action research studies; helping to prepare curriculum guides; using resources of community agencies for curriculum enrichment; locating and procuring services of public and private agencies concerned with the welfare of children and growth; helping schools pioneer in the use of materials and methods; helping schools select and use teaching materials; helping to interpret schools to the public; helping to involve lay citizens in school improvement; directing work conferences; and helping to appraise educational progress.

The ways in which supervisors perform their tasks in this variety of activities depend largely upon their fundamental beliefs, their competencies, and the demands of the situations in which they work. The extent to which supervisory practices are in harmony with the principles on which there is the most agreement in this study is not easily determined. In this chapter an attempt is made, however, to report examples which illustrate the principles of good supervision discussed in chapter I.

The following descriptions are adaptations of reports submitted by rural supervisors from different sections of the United States and selected because they were considered most representative of the material available. Experiences and observations of the writer are also included.

The reports include examples from a variety of situations in which supervisors work. Readers are encouraged to examine the activities described in light of principles of supervision named earlier.

Helping in the Classroom

The typical supervisor used to spend much time in classroom observation focusing his attention on teacher's strengths and weaknesses and in preparing evaluation reports on what he observed. Most of the participants in this study believe that supervision of this nature is not effective in improving classroom practices. They believe that the most effective supervisor is a cooperating participant in the classroom, who spends some time in observing pupils and teachers at work and helps them find answers to their questions. At times he helps the teacher and the pupils plan a unit of work, or takes part in a discussion, or helps appraise results. However, whatever he does in the classrooms is determined in cooperation with the teachers and the administrators.

The following illustrations are taken from a supervisor's diary.

> September 13: The principals at their meeting last week helped me make a tentative plan for visiting schools. They named some of the problems which were disturbing them. Some of them had made suggestions about the ways in which they wanted me to help.
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> When I arrived at the two-teacher school, I found the children in the upper grades checking plans for the week's work. The principal said she wanted me to know what they were doing, and asked Bob to tell me about their plans. The plans for today included committee work on the study of Mexico, individual practice on arithmetic skills, learning how to write a report, discussion of books they enjoyed most, singing, art activities, making a magnet, and physical education activities.
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> When the children began their committee work, the principal asked me if I would visit as many groups as I could and give them any suggestions that I thought would help. She also asked for suggestions about things she could do to help improve her work with the pupils in the school.
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> The food committee wanted to try grinding corn by pounding it on a large stone like the one they had seen in one of their books on Mexico. I suggested that the person in charge of the museum in the nearby town might help them. A few of the children had been in the museum and said they had seen a Mexican exhibit.
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> The committee studying customs had difficulty finding books which would answer their questions. The principal asked Pedro if he thought his mother would help them. (She was born in Mexico.) He agreed to ask her.
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> While the committees were at work, the principal and I found a little time to talk. She asked me what I thought about their unit on

Mexico. What did I think should be accomplished through it? I told her I could probably do a better job of answering her question if she would tell me first about her own hopes. She named such things as better understanding of our neighbors, improved study habits, improved reading skills, and improved cooperation. I told her that I would have a hard time adding to her list; however, another accomplishment that I would be expecting was development of skills in analytical thinking. I referred to the method of studying Mexico as an example. Most of the pupils, I said, seemed to understand the major purpose of their study. They were trying to find out how Mexico had contributed to the living of the people in their community. They were collecting facts to help accomplish their purpose. I anticipated that their study would increase their understanding about contributions from Mexico and thus help facilitate cooperation between us and our Mexican neighbors.

When I left the room, the children were putting away their materials about Mexico and were getting ready for individual practice in arithmetic skills. I told the principal I had enjoyed being with her and congratulated her on her skill in helping each child find a place for himself where he could make contributions that had meaning to him and to the group

She seemed to appreciate this statement. She was just learning how to make better adjustments to individual differences, she said, and so words of encouragement helped.

I spent the next hour in the primary room talking with the teacher about teaching reading. While the children were busy painting pictures, modeling clay, looking at picture books, and reading to themselves, the teacher and I talked about teaching reading. She asked many questions: What is the best way to teach phonics? Do you think we should make experience charts in the second grade? Do you think my second-graders should be learning to use cursive writing or will this interfere with their reading? I referred to some of the research findings about reading and told her as much as I could in the brief time we had. We didn't have much time to talk, however, so I agreed to return after school to continue our discussion. Before leaving the building, I stopped to tell the principal about our plans.

September 16: There are times in a supervisor's life when she is not able to give much on-the-spot assistance even if the teachers seem anxious to get it. The best she can hope for is that they will not be put on the defensive because of something she says and thus make learning better ways more difficult. This is especially true if teachers have not had many opportunities to study child development and how learning takes place. This was the kind of situation in which I found myself in one of the schools today. A way may be found to help these teachers find better answers to their questions, but the best course of action today, I thought, was to do what I could to increase my own understanding of the situation.

When I came into the first-grade room, 17 children were at the board writing numbers; the other 10 children were in their seats ready to begin a reading lesson. The teacher pointed to the group seated and said "These are my repeaters." To divert the teacher's attention into something more pleasant, I commented on the attractive room and

asked the children and the teacher if they had something interesting to tell me. They showed me some pictures they were drawing. The teacher then asked the children if they would like to sing a song. The teacher encouraged them to sing with loud and strained voices. She was probably doing the best she knew how to do. I hope I didn't look too distressed.

The second- and third-grade teacher, who is also the principal, asked for help in arranging her room and getting more bulletin board space. There are blackboards on three walls. I thought one of them might be used as a bulletin board. She didn't agree. She needed all the blackboard space she could get, she said. The blackboards were covered with seat work directions and arithmetic problems. Above the blackboards were borders of tulips which the children had apparently cut out and colored according to the teacher's directions.

I saw no way to provide the kind of help the principal or the other teacher wanted. I thanked them for the opportunity to visit and went on my way. As soon as possible, I will talk with them about joining a child study group. I believe that systematic help in studying children over a period of time will help these teachers provide better learning experiences for their children.

Helping in a Staff Meeting

The supervisor may be a principal, a superintendent, or a person who has the title "supervisor." In some situations, several supervisors may participate. In the following example, the principal assumed major leadership. The general supervisor attended the first meeting of the staff to become acquainted with the situation and to find her role in the program, and this is her account of that meeting.

On a Tuesday afternoon in October, the six members of the staff of the community school had one of their regular meetings. At the beginning of the meeting, the principal asked the new teachers how they were getting along.

"If I could find some interesting readers easy enough for a couple of my third-graders, I think I could do better."

"I presume you want them for John and Henry. As you know, they were in my room last year. I think I put the lists of the books they read last year in their folders. Have you seen them?"

"No, I'm afraid I haven't looked, but I will."

"I have some new books in my room. Some of them are first- and second-grade level books, but they are not labeled. Why don't you come in and look them over?"

"I hope we have been doing everything we can for John and Henry," said the principal. "We have been studying their needs and abilities since they started to school, but I am not sure how well we have succeeded."

"What about the paper for reading charts?" inquired the other new teacher. "Has it arrived?"

"Oh yes" said the principal, "it came this morning."

The principal asked if the group was ready to talk about some of the major projects to be undertaken by the different age groups. "We invited the supervisor to help us with our programs," he began, "so she will join us in our discussion."

"I will be glad to help in any way I can," I said.

"Let's begin with the first grade," said the principal. "Will you tell us what will be one of the major topics for study in your room?"

"Well, we have been talking about the things we need to know about our school and home. I guess most of what we will do, for a long time anyway, will be to study our immediate surroundings."

In the same way, the other teachers told about the plans underway with their children. I kept a record of the purposes which some of the teachers mentioned as the plans were reported. When the listing of major topics was completed, this is the way it appeared on the board:

First grade	Home and school.
Second grade	Our helpers.
Third grade	Animals in our community.
Fourth grade	Transportation.
Fifth grade	How American was discovered.
Sixth grade	Life in other countries.

One of the teachers asked what I thought about their plans.

"They sound all right to me," I said. "I was especially interested in some of the purposes that you mentioned in relation to your plans. May I read the ones I heard to see if I recorded them correctly?"

The rest of the time was spent on a discussion of the school's objectives and how they might be accomplished through the plans which had been outlined. Some of the objectives which the supervisor had recorded were to help children understand their culture, to improve work study skills, to help children learn problem-solving skills, and to improve reading ability.

At the close of the meeting, several teachers asked me if I would help them find reading materials on a wide range of reading levels, on the topics they had chosen for study. I told them I would look through the books in my office, and agreed to return to the school later in the month.

Helping in a Group Conference

Much of a supervisor's time is spent in group conferences working on problems of common concern. A supervisor reports below on a conference with first-grade teachers:

Some of the first-grade teachers in the county were not happy about the additional work which their new health cards required. They thought it took too much time to fill in all the information. I invited the teachers to my office to talk about this problem and to discuss next steps in the health program that had been agreed upon earlier.

I suggested that we discuss the purposes, the need, and the value of the record. All of the teachers entered into the discussion and, afterward, almost all of them appeared to feel better about it.

To help the teachers learn how to fill in the information more efficiently, I suggested that we study a copy of the form for a few minutes. I gave each teacher a copy and referred to the manual of suggestions as we discussed the questions that the teachers considered most important.

Then the teachers asked questions and exchanged ideas about ways to help parents get their children ready for school. The group decided to work during the year on a booklet of information and suggestions for parents of preschool children. All teachers were asked to submit suggestions. We shall meet for the committee's recommendations at a later date. The booklet will be presented to the parents at our clinics next spring. A committee was appointed to gather material for it.

The problem of having children examined was discussed. It was agreed that the best solution might be to ask the county doctor and nurse to visit each school, set up a clinic, and have the children go in for the checkup and vaccination. "I will be glad to work with the doctor," I told them. "I suggest that no child be forced to go."

Helping Teachers Plan With Students

The supervisor invited to her office all the teachers in the county who had asked for help in planning with students. Her role in this meeting was to help teachers understand the purposes of pupil-teacher planning and to discuss ways of planning with pupils. A part of her report about the meeting follows:

"I don't know how to let children in on planning," said one of the social studies teachers. "I wish you would come into my room and show me how to do it the next time you come to our school."

"That's a big order," I said, "but I will do the best I can the next time I visit your school."

"I suggest that we begin the discussion this afternoon by finding out if we agree on some of the reasons for giving children a part in planning what they are going to do." A pause and a nodding of heads were followed by expressions from some of the teachers. "Sounds all right." "Let's begin." "Why don't you start us off?"

With much help from me, emphasis was placed on these reasons for helping children get experiences in planning:

1. The ability to plan in an organized way is an important skill for everybody in our country to acquire.
2. Learning how to plan with others so that group projects can be carried out effectively is important.
3. Taking part in planning helps children understand the purposes of the lesson and the ways of carrying them out. This is not usually true if the teacher makes the plans and merely tells the children what to do.

4. Participating in planning provides many opportunities for learning how to think and to act on the basis of facts.

The latter part of the meeting was spent in discussing examples of pupil-teacher planning. Then tentative arrangements were made for me to help in some of the classrooms during the next month.

Working in the Office

Some of the supervisor's time is necessarily spent in the office. The following excerpts from a supervisor's report illustrate some of her activities:

September 16: So much office work had accumulated . . . I worked all day in the office. I answered some letters, checked on the films for a school, talked to the county doctor about our health plans, and did some thinking about the writing lesson that a primary teacher had asked me to teach.

Late this afternoon a teacher came in for a conference. She had decided to concentrate on some special reading needs of three mentally retarded children. We talked about materials to use, about ways of having them work along with their age group in other things besides reading, and about ways of appraising their progress. We ordered tests which we expected to use to help us learn more about their abilities and achievements. Since she is in a very small school (2 teachers) and has only 14 children in her room, she is in an ideal situation to carry on a program in which individual differences can be taken into account.

September 24: The representative from a publishing company came in. We discussed his reading program. We are using his material as supplementary material, and he would like to have us use his consultant on October 20. It is doubtful that we can arrange for this, however, as the time is short and we are not yet as familiar with his material as we should be.

A principal came by to get some reading materials for her first-grade teacher and to make final plans to go with me to the principals' meeting on October 4.

A teacher came by to ask about getting some art materials. Another teacher called to ask if I would help her choose some reading aids for her first-grade children.

Helping Teachers Understand Children

Another of a supervisor's responsibilities is helping teachers study children. Assistance is provided through child study groups and/or through individual conferences. The following report illustrates a way in which some supervisors in the United States help teachers use a scientific approach to a study of children. The supervisor has recorded some of her experiences:

November 4: I met with the teachers in one of their regular study meetings today. Each teacher had chosen a child for study and had been collecting as much data about the child as she could find in school records and through home visits. In addition, each teacher had been recording at least one anecdote a day describing exactly what she observed the child doing. These teachers had been trying to learn how to record facts, to write exactly what they saw without recording opinion. At this meeting the teachers were organizing the data about one child as one of the teachers read her anecdotal record. A part of the information follows:

BEULAH, Grade 5

Physical Area

Age, 10
Weight, 90 lbs.
Height, 56 in.

Affectional Area

Beulah said to the teacher this morning, "Mother likes my brother better than me. She gives him whatever he wants."

Peer Culture

Beulah, as usual, didn't join her classmates in games today. I tried to get her to play, but she said nobody liked her. She didn't want to play.

Socialization

I heard Beulah tell Connie today that her mother said it was wrong to go to the movies.

Self Development

Beulah scored grade 6 on the standard reading test. She also scored above average in arithmetic and spelling.

Self-Adjustment

Nothing recorded.

In typical organized child study groups, after hearing reports on a child, the teachers at subsequent meetings analyze the information by looking for recurring problems in a child's behavior. They study their findings in relation to scientific facts about child development and try to see causes for the behavior. Increased understanding of causes helps teachers improve their ways of working with them. This was the procedure used in this group.

Near the close of this particular meeting, I complimented the teachers on their progress in using scientific methods to study children. I asked them how they thought they were getting alone. The study group leader replied that she thought they were getting along quite well, although she wasn't sure that all of the teachers understood the purpose of collecting and organizing all this information about a child.

These teachers had discussed the purpose of child study when they joined the group. However, I am never surprised when teachers want assurance that they are getting somewhere in child study, for understanding human behavior is usually difficult.

"I shall be glad to tell you how child study helps me," I said. "As we know, understanding human behavior is not easy even for those who have devoted their lives to a study of it. Without careful and intelligent study most of us are likely to draw conclusions about a child's behavior before we have sufficient data about the child, or before we have enough understanding of the information to know what it means. In child study groups we learn to postpone judgments until we have more basis for making them. This experience has helped me to deal more wisely with children. It has kept me from making as many mistakes as I used to make, and it has helped me to get more insight into the many causes of behavior. It has helped me to find out what the child himself is trying to do, what he is up against, and what I might do to help him. I am becoming better able to center my concern on his problems, hopes, and aspirations. It is helping me to become a more effective teacher."

After I had talked about my experiences for a few minutes, some of the teachers began telling about changes they were making in their teaching. Two of the teachers were still skeptical but the time for this meeting had come to a close. I said I would try to attend their next child study meeting if they wanted me.

Working With An Individual Teacher

Supervisors and principals hold many individual conferences with teachers, administrators, parents, and others. The following example shows how a supervisor and a principal worked with a teacher to find ways of helping a student. The supervisor reports as follows:

One of the high school English teachers had talked to me several times about a boy in the ninth grade who had violated all the rules of good conduct. Today, the principal, the English teacher, and I had a long conference trying to decide what our next steps should be. The English teacher, a member of a child study group, had chosen Shelton for special study. She had collected many facts about him. The pattern which was particularly disturbing to her was "talking back" in a loud voice and refusing to do the things she asked him to do. He was also a poor student, hardly ever doing the assignments and, if he did, not doing them well.

We knew there were causes for Shelton's behavior and that in some way we must find them before our work with him would be effective. I asked the teacher to tell us what she had found out about the boy. She reviewed the facts she had collected from the home and the school records, and the ones she had reported in her anecdotal record. The principal complimented her on the amount of study she had done on Shelton and asked if she had come to any tentative conclusion on the possible causes of his rebellious behavior.

"Well, as I think about the things he has gone through, I am sure I would act in the same way; but still I don't t' [illegible] I can let things go on like this. What shall I do?"

"Would you think," I said, "that because Shelton has experienced very little feeling of success in his school work that this might be one reason for his being a disturber of the peace in class?"

"Yes, I think so," she said, "but I don't know what to do about it. I don't know how to help him succeed."

"Do we have any evidence that he is receiving affection either at home or at school?" asked the principal. "To know that somebody cares about you is quite important in the making of a desirable person. We can be quite sure about this."

Though it was apparent to all of us that helping Shelton would remain a difficult task, we agreed that, if we could find ways of helping him to feel he was achieving in school and to give him some assurance that we cared about him, there was some hope. I felt reasonably sure that the principal and I could improve Shelton's situation if we could help the teacher to feel easier about her own role. She had apparently become anxious about her own lack of success in dealing with the boy, and until she could become more self-confident, she would not be able to work with him without increasing his tension and thus causing him to become more self-defensive.

"It seems to me," I said, "that you have already taken some very important steps to help the boy. You have many facts about him and you know some of the causes for his behavior. Nothing can be more important. I know the picture still looks dark to you; but since we can't undo the many unpleasant things that Shelton has already experienced, we can't hope for big improvement no matter what we do. However, all of us realize that knowing the facts and understanding the causes of a person's behavior have in other instances helped us to work more wisely. This should give us hope in helping Shelton with his problems."

"One idea has occurred to me," said the teacher. "Shelton is interested in automobile mechanics. I understand that he can take a car apart and put it together again and it still runs. If I knew something about cars, perhaps I could help."

It was past time to go home and we had not come to any conclusion about our next steps, but I agreed to return for another conference the following week. In the meantime the principal said he and the teacher would try to find ways to help Shelton through his interest in mechanics.

In the following conference, the principal reported that plans were underway to provide opportunities in auto mechanics for several boys. A father of one of the boys, a mechanic, had agreed to help. The teacher had talked with Shelton about this and he seemed interested. I agreed to talk with the county agricultural agent to see if he had some ideas about providing experiences in farm mechanics for some of the boys. We still had the problem of helping the teacher relate experiences in mechanics to the English curriculum, but first signs of progress were encouraging.

I saw the principal a month later. He told me that they had not yet worked out satisfactory plans for the boys interested in mechanics, but that Shelton was getting along better. The teacher was apparently helping him feel better about himself, and his habit of "talking back" was occurring less frequently. He told me also that the faculty had

decided to make a study of better ways of meeting individual differences. This teacher was only one of the teachers who felt the need of knowing better ways of helping pupils, especially the ones who had unusual problems.

Taking Part in Action Research

For a long time research projects have been carried on only by the well-trained scientists. When research is done only by the research specialists, however, the findings are often slow to affect practice. Realization of this fact has caused many educators to try in other ways to foster needed change. Action research is one of them. Teachers, principals, supervisors, and superintendents in many places are using research methods in cooperative study of their own problems. This process is helping to bring about more improvement in practice than is usually possible when research scientists work alone. One example is given to illustrate:

A number of teachers from the junior high school grades were concerned about the effect of various kinds of grouping of their students on their achievement and behavior. One of the supervisors accepted the leadership responsibility to help them find out. Standardized tests, social behavior scales, and opinionaires were used at the beginning of the year and again 4 months later with several hundred students, to find out if their methods of grouping made a difference on achievement and social behavior. Some students were grouped according to ability as measured by an intelligence test. Some classes were organized according to the students' interests, and they worked through the interest group method during the 4 months' experimental period. In other classes, the students were divided according to friendships. Some classes were divided according to letters of the alphabet represented by the initial letters in names; and for some, an arbitrary grouping method was used. The students worked in whatever kind of grouping procedure was chosen for them for the 4 months' period. There were five classes for each kind of grouping. This experiment included seventh-, eighth-, and ninth-grade classes in science, social science, mathematics, home economics, agriculture, and English.

The supervisor who directed the study reported the results as follows:

For the purposes within the limits of the study and as revealed by the study, when all factors or measures used were considered, the five kinds of groupings arranged themselves in the following order of effectiveness: friendship, interest, ability, arbitrary, or alphabetical.

Satisfactory growth was found in achievement and social behavior in the friendship and interest groups. Growth in the ability, arbitrary, and alphabetical groups was on the average less than normal.[1]

[1] Delvin Dae Harrah. "A Study of the Effectiveness of Five Kinds of Grouping in the Classroom." Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Virginia, 1955, p. 183.

Helping To Build Community Schools

The school is one of the instruments which the community uses to improve itself. The school is centered on the needs of the community. The resources in the community contribute to the improvement of the schools. The effectiveness of the educational program is measured partly by determining the extent to which the citizens in the community become better able to solve their problems because of the school.

In a good community school, all of the people help. The effective supervisor provides the kind of aid which the school uses to do its job better. One of the responsibilities of the supervisor is to help the citizens and the school personnel understand what a good school can do and how each person can contribute toward its development. He participates in or leads discussion or study groups of parents, teachers, and other citizens. Individual conferences are held with parents, health or welfare department personnel, public librarians, presidents of local organizations, school board members, and many others. He gives talks to community groups and participates in civic organizations. He helps schools use community resources effectively.

Many supervisors work with committees of parents and teachers in their study of objectives and of better ways of reporting to parents the research findings in the teaching of reading, spelling, social studies, and similar topics.

Activities which tie the school and community together are important for teachers, principals, supervisors, and superintendents, and all others who are concerned about the development of good education for their community. This example shows one supervisor's role in building community schools:

> The supervisor had become concerned about the way in which health was being taught in most of the schools in the county. Many of the children seemed undernourished. Diseases of various sorts were serious handicaps to successful living in the county, yet most of the health education was textbook-centered and was not closely related to the problems in the county.
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> He discussed his observations with teachers and principals to find out what they thought. Some appeared satisfied with what they were doing, but a few were interested in finding ways to improve their work. A few of the teachers, two principals, and the supervisor began to inform themselves about some of the health resources available and to consider ways to study their problems. After talking with some of the local physicians, they decided to make a special effort to inform themselves about a particular disease which was prevalent in the county, what caused it, and how it could be prevented.

At a meeting of the principals in January, the supervisor asked for an opportunity to discuss the health situation and to get their opinions on it. This marked the beginning of a series of meetings and activities. Committees of teachers were appointed to carry out various phases of the plans which were made.

At first the supervisor met with each committee, helping the members to plan for study and action. Activities of these communities included getting information about the available resources in the State department of health, finding ways in which local doctors could help, preparing reading references for children, and preparing information which children could read. The activities also included preparation of suggestive teaching units and making plans for health examinations in the county.

Another way in which the supervisor helped was to talk with the children in most of the classrooms of the county. Several community groups invited him to talk about the health program in the county.

The supervisor tried to serve as a resource person in relation to problems which were recognized by the people in the county. He also helped them recognize new problems and assisted them in finding solutions. Over a period of 3 years, community interest in health grew to the extent that plans for a county health department were made, and the school curriculum became more problem-centered in other areas as well as health.

Providing Specialized Help

Many rural schools do not have access to the help of special supervisors in areas such as art, music, pupil guidance, and physical education. However, these special supervisors are becoming more easily available in many parts of the country. The following example shows a supervisor helping teachers learn how to provide opportunities for their pupils in the creative arts:

The supervisor with the help of an art committee collected inexpensive materials and put them on large tables for a workshop activity. Among the materials were different sizes and colors of string, a few stacks of old newspapers, clay, a roll of wrapping paper, a few cans of powder paints and brushes, some finger paints, crayons, newsprint, pieces of cloth, and scissors.

On an afternoon in early fall approximately 60 classroom teachers in the county who had asked for help in art came to the workshop to learn ways to help children develop skill in art. The supervisor introduced the program by telling the teachers about the materials available for their use, urged them to let their imagination go, and commented that they might be surprised at what they could do and especially at the fun they could have. After all, she explained, the joy that comes from experimenting with use of different material is important in art. To give the teachers some ideas to start with she offered them a few suggestions on handling materials. She asked for ideas and also encouraged them to ask questions. After a brief period of discussion, the teachers began working with the materials, each in his own way.

Sessions such as these were held one afternoon a week from 3 to 5 o'clock. The supervisor spent much of her time in helping individuals as they seemed to want it and in directing group discussions based on the teachers' questions, purposes in teaching art, ways to help children, and on art materials. Most teachers made a variety of things—ash trays, murals, mobiles, puppets, table decoration, and paintings.

Workshop experiences continued throughout the fall. As the teachers became more confident in the use of art materials, they provided more opportunities for their children to use them in the classrooms. The supervisor also visited the classrooms and assisted the teachers in their work with children.

The following example shows how a music supervisor helped children and their teacher to enjoy music:

"When can you help us with our tonettes?" asked the fourth- and fifth-graders. They were talking to the music supervisor who had come into their room to see if she could help them and their teacher with music.

In a few minutes the teacher, the children, and the supervisor were enthusiastically trying out their skills in reading music and in producing two-part harmony in Christmas carols, using their newly acquired tonettes.

Before the supervisor left the room, the children told her about an album of Christmas carols which they had purchased. They invited her to come with them to the auditorium to hear them. (The record player was in the auditorium where they had access to an electric outlet.) During the recess period, not only the fourth- and fifth-graders enjoyed the Christmas recordings, but when several children from the other rooms heard the music they came too. The supervisor complimented the children on what they were doing and thanked them for the opportunity to hear the records.

Developing Programs for the Culturally Deprived

Unfortunately, some of our Nation's people are not prepared to cope with the increasingly complex problems in our society because they are trapped in pockets of poverty. Current studies show approximately one-half of the Nation's rural people (farm and nonfarm) in the low-income and least well-educated group.

Prompted by a growing realization that a well-educated citizenry does not become trapped in poverty, school personnel in cooperation with many other groups are reexamining conditions of the poor in their own communities. Encouraged by the fact that Federal assistance is available to areas needing help, many communities have developed action programs designed especially to meet the needs of the most seriously deprived children and youth.

In response to a realization that good educational opportunities for all children and youth are essential, some of the people in a

coal mining region in Appalachia began discussing possibilities for developing programs designed to better serve the needs of various age groups—preschool, elementary, and secondary. Ideas for such programs were initiated by community leaders in cooperation with the county school superintendent and the school board. A county council was organized to serve as a sponsor to the programs developed.

The county school supervisor was invited to advise and assist in the planning of a program for the most deprived preschool children in the coal mining area. The supervisor invited several persons to help in the development of this project—preparing a statement of justification and purpose, identifying problems involved, identifying children of greatest need, soliciting cooperation of parents, and setting up guidelines for good preschool education. Represented on this committee were a nurse, a principal, the visiting teacher, a social worker, a member of the county council, and several parents and teachers.

Only a small beginning has taken place in providing educational opportunities for preschool children in the county. However, the county council and many others continue to point up the need to make major attacks on its massive health, unemployment, and other problems that result from poverty and cannot be resolved without greatly improved educational opportunities for its children and youth. An important role of the county school supervisor and her committee is to communicate regularly with the council, parents, teachers, principals, and others involved in the improvement of learning opportunities for children.

Among the most rewarding experiences of the supervisor and the county school superintendent, however, was the initiation of a kindergarten program in the fall of 1964 for 5-year-olds in one school. The teacher, who had been the primary teacher in the seven-teacher school for several years and who served as the supervisor of a summer project for preschool children, was the first kindergarten teacher in the county.

The 6-week summer program began in 1963 for the 46 children in the community who would enter first grade either in the fall of 1963 or 1964. The children were together for a short opening period, lunch in the dining hall, after-lunch rest, and a short closing period. For other activities the children were in small, flexibly organized groups. The program for all children included physical education and free play; storybook periods in the library and in classrooms; music and rhythms; science and creative art; and language.

The staff was composed of four qualified elementary school teachers especially prepared to teach young children. Represented on the staff were persons with special competencies in physical education, art and science, music, and language arts. Other members of the staff were a librarian, a hot lunch supervisor, and a cook. Two of the teachers also drove the school buses.

Pupils who had completed the seventh grade were asked to be volunteer assistants. In an overwhelming response, both former students and visitors in the community offered their services. These volunteers worked on a 1-day-per-week basis under the direction of the project supervisor, who was also one of the teachers.

In physical education, the children developed physical skills—walking, running, skipping, jumping, climbing, bouncing, throwing and kicking a ball; played and enjoyed simple games; and learned proper use of playground equipment—swings, slides, monkey bar, jungle gym, and seesaws. In free play periods the children could choose any playground activity, and most children responded eagerly. Some, however, needed special encouragement, and a few were still nonparticipants at the end of the summer. The volunteers were particularly effective in the physical education program, giving much needed individual help under the teacher's guidance.

In the library each group had a storytelling period. Each day at least one story from an illustrated book was read to the children. The children participated in simple jingles and action verses and songs, and had opportunities to handle books. The librarian rated as the most worthwhile experiences children had in the library the handling and examining of picture books and the selecting of favorites from a display. Many children, however, were ready for only the simplest books and stories. Very often one of the volunteers worked with one or two children not mature enough to sit still and listen with the group, moving the restless children to places with fewer distractions.

The teacher who was a specialist in art and science provided a highly creative program. The children used crayons, paints, clay, scissors, paste, and finger paint in studying stick printing (with vegetables), color, shape, and design. They took nature walks and observed the animals. Children's work was exhibited in the dining room and in other places. Their individual folders of art work provided very interesting records of individual growth. Although development of skills in art was encouraged, the program was completely creative in nature. Children who preferred to spend part or all of the period playing with blocks were allowed to do so.

Other activities included singing, rhythms, dramatizing, working with puzzles, matching games, finding likenesses and differences in actual objects, making paper shapes, doing speech exercises, and playing games. Individual and group oral expression was almost completely void of results in the first weeks. A great range in individual children's interests and abilities was evident.

Very little was done with numbers. Most of the children had some knowledge of counting and an interest in playing with the counting frame, but sustained interest in number readiness experiences was lacking, except in such general concepts as "What is big?" or "What is little?" Some reading readiness materials projected on the screen were popular and provided an introduction to the use of audiovisual material on various subjects.

The lunch program provided opportunities for improved nutrition as well as valuable learning experiences about eating at a "set" table (with flowers) and eating habits and table manners. The lunchroom supervisor involved the volunteers in experiences useful to them—such as ironing, sewing on buttons, getting flowers for tables, and preparing the lunch. Volunteers ate with the children at their tables, thus providing important learning opportunities for both groups.

Although the summer program for preschool children in this community is still being evaluated, available evidence seems to indicate that the children's chances for success in school are increasing. Plans are now underway to establish preschool programs patterned after this project in 15 elementary school centers in the county for approximately 450 5-year-olds.

For Further Study

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Chapter IV

APPRAISING SCHOOL SUPERVISION

SUPERVISION IS AN INTEGRAL PART of the total school program. It is difficult, therefore, to study its effectiveness apart from the whole. But if we are to learn how to make supervision better, we must make every effort possible to find ways to appraise its effectiveness.

The purpose of this chapter is to report ways that are being used to help evaluate supervision and the results of a few studies conducted to test the effectiveness of the principles of supervision. The various methods of evaluation used will be discussed in relation to these topics: Effects of supervision on achievement of pupils, effects of supervision on teaching, effects of supervision on teachers' understanding of children, what teachers value most in supervision, and supervisory practices.

Effects of Supervision on Achievement of Pupils

The main purpose of school supervision is to help provide better learning situations for children and youth, and the most direct way to appraise supervision is to study its effects on the learners. This is also the most difficult approach. There is no way of being sure which changes in children's development can be attributed to supervision because hundreds of other forces are affecting them at the same time. Attempts are being made, however, to appraise supervision by studying some of its effects on the learners.

A study which compares the achievement of children in supervised and unsupervised schools was conducted by Franseth[1] in Georgia. Achievements of two groups as nearly equal in all

[1] Jane Franseth. *Learning To Supervise Schools: An Appraisal of the Georgia Program*, Office of Education, HEW, Circular 289. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1951, reprinted 1957, 50 p. *See also* Reba M. Burnham and Martha L. King. *Supervision in Action*. Washington: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1961, p. 63.

respects as possible, except for supervision, were compared. It was found that, according to results of the Iowa Every Pupil Tests in reading, work-study skills, arithmetic, and language, children in supervised schools were achieving more than the children in unsupervised schools. It was also found that children in the supervised schools were developing more skill in democratic citizenship. (McCall's School Practices Questionnaire was used to help appraise skills in democratic citizenship.) It was concluded that the kind of supervision provided in these schools helped to increase pupil achievement in the areas of learning tested and that there was a conscious attempt to practice the principles of supervision discussed in chapter I.

Effects of Supervision on Teaching

If supervision is effective, teaching improves and the learning opportunities for children become richer. Some schools are trying to examine the changes in teaching that are taking place where certain supervisory services are available.

Many supervisors help teachers to understand children. Some do this through an organized child study program. In some school systems the help from local leaders is supplemented by regular consultant service from a university. Greene[2] made an analysis of teachers' anecdotal records to find out whether teachers who were enrolled in a child study group changed their practices in working with children. Major findings were:

Changes in Teacher-Pupil Relationship

During the 3-year period studied, there was a statistically significant increase in the more positive ways teachers handled children. Based on pupil response to these positive ways of handling, it appears that reasoning or guiding, motivating intrinsically, and being supportive are effective methods which teachers use in teacher-pupil relationships.

There was a highly significant decrease in the more negative ways teachers handled children at the 3-year levels of the program. This suggests that teachers learned more readily the things not to do, such as using shame, sarcasm, threat, and other negative ways of handling children.

Evidence supported the hypothesis that the child study program was effective with high school and elementary school teachers in improving teacher-pupil relationships.

[2] John D. Greene. "A Study of Some Curriculum Changes of Teachers Who Participated in the Child Study Program," Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Institute for Child Study, University of Maryland, 1952. *See also* Richard M. Brandt and Hugh V. Perkins. *Research Evaluating a Child Study Program*, Monograph of the Society for Research in Child Development, vol. 21, Serial No. 62, No. 1. Lafayette, Ind.: Child Development Publications, 1956, p. 54–58.

Changes in Classroom Organization

There was an increase in evidence of more democratically organized classrooms at each of the 3-year levels of the child study program, and a decrease in evidence of more autocratically organized classrooms. A detailed analysis revealed that the changes were greater in elementary than in high school classrooms. Evidence in classroom organization in high schools indicated some change from the first-year level of the program, but evidence at the third-year level indicated a tendency of high school teachers to revert to original methods of classroom organizations.

In some studies, the effect of supervision through helping teachers to understand children is being examined by analyzing the recurring patterns of teaching and curriculum practices observed in teachers' anecdotal records. The following recurring patterns seem to be typical of many classrooms of the teachers who participate in a child study program:

- Children are helped to feel a sense of achievement—threat of failure by teachers is at a minimum.
- Children feel that their teachers care about them.
- Many experiences are being provided to help children use their creative abilities, especially in art.
- Much of the curriculum content is based on the interests of the children.
- Skills such as reading, arithmetic, and English are being taught through many kinds of meaningful experiences.
- Individual differences are taken into account, especially in regard to the use of reading materials.

Effects of Supervision on Teachers' Understanding of Children

Southtown Studies.[3]—The effects of an organized program of child study on teachers' understanding of children and on teaching practices were analyzed in "Southtown." Leadership was provided by the local school superintendent and the principals. In cooperation with the school staffs, the staff of the Institute for Child Study collected data periodically over a period of 4 years, through the use of the following instruments and sources:

1. A Q-Sort test of 115 statements describing traits of both the most effective teacher and the least effective teacher. Each of the participating teachers arranged the statements in a continuum from those that in her opinion were least characteristic to those most character-

[3] Adapted from Brandt and Perkins, ibid.

istic of an effective teacher. To estimate a teacher's ability to judge teacher effectiveness, the authors compared the teachers' opinions with the judgments of a panel of authorities on the subject.
2. Open-ended interviews in which each teacher was asked to talk about the community, the school, and the children.
3. One-hour observations in the teachers' classrooms.
4. A teacher-information sheet.

Information was secured about each teacher prior to the child study experiences and again at the end of each year of the program. The findings were compared to determine the amount of change, if any, that had been achieved. Researchers report some of the findings:

> After 2 years in a program involving direct study of children, George Avery found that teachers showed positive and significant change in ability (1) to withhold judgment regarding a child's behavior until sufficient evidence was available and to know where to find additional sources of information; (2) to analyze hypotheses of behavior in relation to actual evidence and to draw appropriate generalizations regarding the causes of a child's behavior; and (3) to ascribe the behavior, attitudes, and beliefs of an ideal teacher in terms of his understanding of human growth and development. However, there was no significant change in a teacher's ability to make recommendations to aid a child in adjusting to his situation.
>
> Jewell Haddock found that teachers changed significantly in sensitivity toward and greater use of human development principles as the teachers progressed through the program. The changes were evident in their classroom behavior.

What Teachers Value Most in Supervision

Another approach to the evaluation of supervision is asking teachers what helps them most to do a good job of teaching. Unfortunately the reports on teachers' opinions do not include information on the achievement of the children or the growth of the teachers of these children, or the growth of the teachers in the school systems reporting this method of appraising supervision. Objective evidence comparing the quality of the school program as a result of supervision and the kind of supervision teachers value most in their schools is not available. However, some educational leaders report that improvement in teaching and the kind of supervision which teachers value seem to go together. Though more research is needed to test this hypothesis, it may be assumed that supervisors who want to improve their methods can learn much by seeking the opinions of their teachers. A few studies of this nature are reported here.

Monroe County, W. Va.[4]—Through an open-end questionnaire, 88 teachers in the county answered a series of questions appraising supervision. A summary of their replies to each of these questions follows:

What do you like about the supervisory program we now have?

Helpfulness, friendliness, and cooperation of the supervisor; the supervisor who understands problems and needs of children; county meetings, printed material, and supervisory visits.

What would you like to have a supervisor do that is not now being done?

More constructive criticism (including more discussion of teachers' weak points); more classroom visits by the supervisor; more demonstration teaching; more specialized supervision in such subjects as music, art, reading, arithmetic; more meetings, especially discussions; and more materials and supplies.

What kinds of experiences do you want a supervisor to arrange to help you become a better teacher?

Observation of demonstration teaching, observation of the work of other teachers, attendance at meetings and conferences, participation in discussions and workshops, and examination of new supplies and equipment.

Alabama.[5]—A statewide survey of teachers' opinions about supervisory services was conducted as a part of a general study designed to improve supervisory services in the State. Questionnaires were mailed to every 10th teacher in school systems in which supervisors were employed. Replies to the 315 questionnaires returned were summarized. Some of the questions and responses follow:

Do you prefer to teach in a system which provides the services of supervision of instruction? Of the 303 teachers answering the question, 249 said *yes*; 54, *no*.

[4] Adapted from Galen F. Dulin. "Evaluating Supervisory Service." Eastern Area Supervision Association of West Virginia. (Typewritten report.) *See also* Jane Franseth. "What Teachers Value Most in Supervision," *Supervision As Leadership*. Evanston, Ill.: Harper and Row Publishers, Inc., 1961, p. 306–307.

[5] Adapted from the Committee of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction, Alabama Education Association, *A Look at Supervision in Alabama*, Montgomery, Ala.: State Department of Education, 1955.

Do you use the services of the supervisor? Of the 300 answering this question, 251 said *yes*; 49, *no*.

Which of these services do you find most helpful? Of the 315 questionnaires returned, 45 did not answer this question; 24 indicated that only a minimum amount of help was received; and 246 respondents specified the following services as being most helpful:

- Supervisor's role in coordinating and giving guidance in the systemwide inservice program.
- Supervisor's help in planning various aspects of the program, such as workshops, school visitation and consultative services.
- Supervisor's assistance on problems of classroom management and organization, selection and use of instructional materials, and curriculum and teaching methods.
- Supervisor's helpful advice, suggestions, and constructive criticisms relative to a teacher's work, including encouragement.

Teachers were asked to indicate which supervisory services were least helpful. Of the 315 questionnaires returned, 144 gave no answer; 23 said all services were helpful; 27 said that the supervisor had not given them much help. Of the 121 answers which specified least helpful services—

- 54 had to do with classroom visits by the supervisor. Of these, 20 listed visits without followup conferences; 21 listed classroom visits in general; 5 mentioned short or few visits; 4 mentioned unscheduled visits; 3 said relationships in connection with classroom visits were poor; and 1 questioned planned visits.
- 23 answers were related to the supervisor's approach or way of work.
- 8 mentioned inservice meetings as being least helpful.
- 6 mentioned the supervisor imposing his program or way of work.
- 3 mentioned limited help because of poor administrative relationships or assigned administrative responsibilities.

- 27 mentioned miscellaneous services in which the supervisor was least helpful, such as in teaching slow children, classifying pupils, securing visual-aid materials, grouping children socially rather than mentally.

Supervisory Practices

Another method of appraising supervision is to examine the practices of supervisors to ascertain the extent to which they are following good principles of supervision. Examples of such practices follow.

Louisiana.[6]—For a number of years, Louisiana supervisors have participated in projects aimed toward improving their own work in the supervision of instruction. Later, however, the Louisiana School Supervisor's Association in cooperation with the Louisiana State Department of Education and Louisiana State University developed an effective approach toward evaluation of supervisory practices. The group examined their own practices to find answers to such questions as: What do supervisors do to improve instruction? What procedures do they employ? and Are the things they do considered good practices?

A group of Louisiana supervisors (1) kept a log of activities on selected half-days throughout the first school year, (2) selected one supervisory incident which occurred on each half-day and wrote a detailed description of it, (3) analyzed the data to learn what part of the supervisor's time was given to various activities, and (4) analyzed the professional literature and research to ascertain if the procedures most commonly used were considered to be good ones by recognized authorities in the field.

One of the recurring common practices found in the data was that "Many activities of the supervisors involve the principal and the supervisor working together." To illustrate the method of handling and interpreting data, a summary of the evidence identified in the time log and anecdotal data substantiating this statement follows:

> Out of some 100 time log and anecdotal recordings written by the participating supervisors, it was found that work with the principal was mentioned at least once in each of 71 recordings. The supervisors' most common type of activity with the principal was the individual conference. The individual conferences between supervisors and the principal dealt with approximately 35 different topics. The subject of

[6] Adapted from Thomas R. Landry and others, "An Approach to Evaluation of Supervisory Practices," *Educational Leadership*, vol. 16, No. 8, May 1959, p. 485–488.

> the individual conference mentioned most often was the supervisor's visits to the classrooms, before and after visitation.
>
> Other topics dealt with often in the individual conference with principals were materials of instruction, curriculum and teaching problems, testing and interpretation of scores, needs of individual pupils, annual reports, and inservice education activities.
>
> Another common type of activity which involved the supervisor and principal working together was the group conference, such as curriculum workshops for teachers, principals' meetings, and faculty study groups.
>
> Visiting classrooms together was another fairly common practice of supervisors and principals.[7]

A recent trend in the thinking of writers and researchers in the field indicated that the school building principal should assume the key educational role in his school. In such case, the supervisor is consultant but without authority to make decisions about what should be done in a school. The anecdotal and time log data, the Louisiana supervisors found, did not clearly show what the common practice was in this regard.

Each of the common supervisory practices was evaluated according to the findings of research and the judgment of authorities in the field. Space does not permit a report on each of the practices identified; however, examples of summary statements of the common practices follow:

- There was considerable variation in what was done by supervisors while visiting in the classroom.
- Questions and suggestions from teachers and principals were taken into account by the supervisor in determining what services he would provide. Evidence also indicated, however, that ideas and activities were often initiated by the supervisors.
- It was found that serving as consultants to individuals and groups relative to topics of mutual concern was common practice.
- There was evidence to indicate that the supervisors in this study generally, though not always, provided opportunities for the persons involved to share in planning and in making decisions about matters that affect them.
- Many activities of the supervisor involved his working with the principal.

[7] Ibid.

Obtaining data about the effects of supervision on pupil learning or teaching practices was not possible in this study. Until more information in this respect can be secured, the results noted are based on these assumptions: (1) To the extent that the practices revealed by the data illustrate good principles of supervision, the chances are that the learning opportunities provided for pupils are improved and that the pupil learning outcomes will be increasingly favorable as a result; and (2) it is further assumed that cooperative, voluntary, highly motivated self-examination, in light of certain tested principles of supervision, facilitate progress toward improved supervisory practices.

Small Rural School.[8]—Mountain Valley School was a 2-teacher school with 50 pupils in grades 1 through 7, located in the Appalachian area in Kentucky. The two teachers were members of a 3-year Rural School Improvement Project sponsored by Berea College. The supervisor who helped the teachers and the community improve the learning situations for the children in the school reported some of the accomplishments of this school during a period of supervisory assistance as follows:

> Early in my first year at Mountain Valley, I made mental notes about improvements which I hoped could be made, but I knew that significant changes were unlikely unless the teachers also believed that the changes would improve the learning situation for their pupils. The upper-grade teacher especially defended what the school had been doing in no uncertain terms. "I don't believe in these frills you read about in books," he said. "They might work in some places, but the people who write books have never seen Mountain Valley. These children are lucky to have what I can give them."
>
> After one or two visits I felt certain that the upper-grade teacher was not likely to welcome my suggestions. Although he seemed glad to have me visit, there was little evidence that he considered my ideas useful. I had observed him use many teaching practices which I considered questionable such as a series of questions about topics in their textbooks to which the children's typical answers were "Yes, sir" and "No, sir."
>
> To my surprise, one day he looked at me and said, "Is there anything I can do to get out of having all these classes every day?" I hardly knew what to say. But after regaining my equilibrium, I said, "I've been thinking the same thing. It is just too much to have all those classes every day. Let's talk about other ways of handling the work."
>
> The going was rough for some time to come, even though there were bright spots now and then. In the second year, I could see more and more opportunities for a cooperative attack on problems in an atmos-

[8] Adapted from Jane Franseth, "Supervisory Services in a Small Rural School," *Supervision As Leadership.* Evanston, Ill.: Harper and Row Publishers, Inc., 1961, p. 193–195. The information for this report was provided by Mabel Jessee (Berea College) in her story of supervision in the Mountain Valley School.

phere of support and understanding. I tried to base my suggestions on the findings of research whenever possible.

What were some of the outcomes of the work in Mountain Valley? Among the signs of progress were the following:

1. Library books and other resources were used to supplement information in the textbooks and to acquaint children with good literature.
2. Teaching of health became more related to the health problems of the pupils in the school. Time was saved by combining health classes instead of having a separate class for each grade. More nutritious lunches were served.
3. Instead of tracing, coloring pictures, and using patterns, children were encouraged to express their own ideas through the use of tempera paint and other art media.
4. Some opportunities were provided for pupils to participate in planning their activities.
5. Through resources at Berea College, the Kentucky State Department of Education, and the Council of the Southern Mountains, consultant help in physical education and art was provided by specialists who were invited by the teachers and the supervisor to assist them in providing better learning experiences.
6. Through cooperation of parents, the county school board, teachers, and children, the physical environment of the school was made more attractive and useful.

When the upper-grade teacher prepared his annual report at the end of the second year, he listed the names of those who had served as resource people in his school, adding, "The supervisor comes in at odd times to furnish the spark, or rather to fan it, to a full flame." To a casual observer such a statement might not seem important, but to me these words were full of meaning and represented more progress than at one time I had dared hope for.

Self-Evaluation.—A beginning supervisor in one of the largest rural school systems in Georgia used self-evaluation and the perception of teachers to help her evaluate her work. Entries in her diary, as reported by Reba Burnham,[9] show some of the ways in which this supervisor approached the task.

June 1: I have just completed my first year in supervision * * * I have really been "on the run" this year—from school to school, from meeting to meeting * * * How am I going to evaluate my work?

I need first to prepare some sort of self-evaluation, to answer honestly and sincerely some of the questions that will indicate whether I have demonstrated good qualities and competencies as a supervisor. I can use my daily log as a guide. I can take a long look at the record

[9] Reba M. Burnham, "A New Supervisor on the Job," *Supervision in Action.* Washington: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, National Education Association, 1961, p. 22–26.

I have kept the entire year at various intervals on "How I Spend My Time" * * * I have kept a record of comments that have been passed on to me regarding my work, both of a positive and a negative nature, and I will attempt to analyze these from a professional standpoint and to show their application to the school system.

* * * I must take a look at how the teachers and principals regard my services as a supervisor. One way of assessing the perceptions of the teachers and principals would be to devise a simple checklist for each group that could be answered with little effort and in an honest and sincere manner. * * * A copy of a tentative evaluation instrument follows:

To: Teachers and principals
From: Supervisor
Subject: Supervisory checklist

Will you please * * * check the data below, indicating your honest and sincere opinion of the services of your instructional supervisor? Do not sign this sheet. Your effort will be greatly appreciated, since this instrument will be used to improve supervisory services to teachers in the future.

	Often	*Seldom*	*Never*
Has the instructional supervisor offered his services to you?			
Have the services given been of help to you?			
Do you feel the supervisor is competent in offering help?			
Would you wish for more expanded services of the supervisor?			
Does the supervisor employ democratic procedures while giving service?			
After requesting the supervisor's help or service, have you felt that as a result of this service you became more competent as a teacher (in a particular instance)?			
Has the supervisor failed to give you the service you requested?			
Have the resources which the supervisor has identified or accumulated been of help to you?			
Would you like to invite the supervisor into your classroom to observe your teaching practices?			
Are you familiar with the services that the supervisor can offer to classroom teachers?			

Supervisors' Perceptions of Supervision.—Investigating the roles of school personnel has become the subject of much research

in recent years. Coming to the forefront are studies in which the information about role performance is provided by the persons who perform the role. Investigations of this nature are based on the belief that understanding the behavior of people requires understanding of how things seem to them.[10]

One study[11] reports on role performance examined and described by 25 supervisors performing the role of supervision. Two types of responses were used to obtain the supervisors' perceptions of supervision: a "free" choice response and a "forced" choice response. It was assumed that the "free" choice responses would describe the role of the supervisor as it is actually performed, and that the "forced" choice responses would describe accurately the role of the supervisor as it is ideally performed.

The "free" choice responses were secured through an opinionnaire. Each of 25 randomly selected supervisors was asked to state the supervisory principles which had real meaning to him. One hundred ninety-eight statements were submitted. Johnnye Cox reports a summary of findings of this part of the study as follows:

> * * * supervisors see themselves as service personnel, concerned with the feelings, desires, and needs of teachers and with creating conditions that make for effective growth of teachers and students.

For the "forced" choice responses for this study, the data are the responses which the 25 randomly selected supervisors made as they used the Q-Sort technique[12] to describe an ideal supervisor. Each supervisor was given a group of 100 supervisory behaviors and asked to sort them into 9 piles in a forced distribution ranging from "least like" ideal to "most like" ideal. A report on findings follows:

> The "most like" ideal behavior selected was stated, believes in people. Second in importance was, believes that each teacher and each child in the school has value and a contribution to make. Five behaviors received equal importance for third place: providing security for the teacher, showing confidence in teachers; evidencing faith in teachers, having respect for contributions of teachers; and providing a climate for working cooperatively with teachers. Four behaviors—releasing talents of teachers, encouraging experimentation with new ideas and

[10] For further elaboration of this concept, see Arthur W. Combs et al. *Perceiving, Behaving, Becoming*, ASCD Yearbook. Washington: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, NEA, 1962.

[11] Based on a report by Johnnye V. Cox, "Supervisors' Perceptions of Supervision," *The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*, vol. XXX-1, fall 1963, p. 20–27.

[12] The Q-Sort used in this study was developed by Robert E. Bills and associates at Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama.

practices in teaching, using group opinion in making decisions, and respecting teachers in presence of students—received equal significance for fourth place.

Johnnye Cox reports that a rank of the "least like" behaviors revealed that the 25 supervisors in the study disapprove of the supervisor (1) who discusses freely teachers' problems with outsiders, (2) who makes decisions and tells the staff what to do, (3) who feels that he is fully capable to do a good job independently of help from others, (4) who tries constantly to prove that he knows his job, and (5) who feels rejected by the group.

The choices of "least like" ideal behavior indicate strong feelings of dislike for the supervisor who disregards the feelings of teachers as he plans and carries out his responsibilities as supervisor.

In terms of the data and the basic assumptions of this study, Johnnye Cox concludes that:

1. There are no significant differences in the "free" and "forced" perceptions of supervisors about their role.
2. When supervisors describe their role they do so in terms of tasks to be performed and the relationships to be fostered. They perceive the tasks as those which relate to improving teaching and learning and the relationships as those which dignify and enhance the worth and value of teachers and students. It may be further concluded that supervisors work at these tasks in terms of the perceptions which they have described.

Ohio.[13]—An action research study conducted by the Ohio ASCD Research Committee investigated the activities, functions, and beliefs of supervisors in the State of Ohio. The ultimate purpose of the study was to develop a statement setting forth beliefs about the role of the county and city supervisors in Ohio to give guidance both to administrative and supervisory personnel. It was thought that in the process of focusing attention upon these functions many supervisors would be motivated to study and improve their own conditions and relationships.

Two kinds of information were needed as a basis for this study: (1) present practices concerning the work and role of the supervisor and (2) desirable practices. Much of the data were secured through taped group discussions. Six groups of supervisors, most

[13] Based on a report of the Research Committee of the Ohio Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, *The Role of the Supervisor in Ohio's Schools.* Columbus, Ohio: The Ohio Education Association, 1959, p. 38.

of whom had been meeting from time to time to share experiences, discussed their work as supervisors—not only the way things were but also the way they thought things should be. The Research Committee analyzed the taped material. This analysis, supplemented with information from other sources, became the basis of a checklist dealing with the "Activities" and "Operational Philosophy of Supervision." A statement, "Beliefs about the Role of the Supervisor in Ohio," was prepared, excerpts of which follow:

> *Definition.*—The supervisor is the member of the staff who has been assigned to work full time with teachers and principals in a continuous program of curriculum improvement. His training and experience are such that he is able to release potential leadership and involve all concerned in achieving common goals, such as cooperative staff relationships, philosophy and goals for education that meet the needs of the boys and girls in the community, better understanding of boys and girls and how they learn, adequate evaluation of the growth and development of children and youth * * * *.
>
> *Activities.*—The supervisor has two main concerns as he works to help teachers and principals become more creative and self-directing. He works as a resource person in individual schools through arranging cooperatively for classroom observations and conferences, teachers' visitation in other classrooms, small group meetings, action research studies, use of professional resources * * * *.
>
> He takes the initiative for involving teachers and principals in cooperative development of a program for the school system that is in keeping with the broad goals of education in a democracy. This includes working with administrators and a representative committee of teachers in setting up long-term goals * * * *.
>
> *The Supervisor's Place in the Organization.*—The supervisor is responsible to the superintendent. His status in the organization will vary with the expectations of the people with whom he works and the responsibilities assigned to him. It is desirable that he serves as a consultant without administrative authority * * * *.
>
> *Relationships.*—To a large extent the effectiveness of the supervisor depends upon the operational philosophy in the local school system * * * He shares with the superintendent, principals, and teachers the responsibility for developing working relationships in which human values are conserved * * * The supervisor and principal work together to resolve any differences in philosophy * * * Both have responsibility for taking the initiative in clearing up any misunderstandings that arise * * * *.
>
> *Evaluation of the Supervisor's Services.*—The supervisor shares with the superintendent responsibility for planning procedures for evaluating his services from time to time * * * Personal observations are supplemented by such procedures as the analysis of:
>
> The way a supervisor spends time.
>
> The quantity and quality of calls that come in.
>
> The reactions of teachers and principals to the ways in which the supervisor is and can be of help.

Changes in attitudes and practices in the schools and classrooms where the supervisor has worked.

Evidences of growth in initiative and resourcefulness on the part of the staff.

To try to communicate an integrated picture of the activities, thoughts, and feelings of these supervisors, the Research Committee attempted to visualize the situations of three of them: a city elementary school supervisor, a county elementary school supervisor, and a city schools general supervisor. The report[14] on the county elementary school supervisor follows:

> This county supervisor is a woman who has been in educational work 18 years and came into her present position 2 years ago from that of supervising teacher at the primary level. She has a load of from 75 to 100 teachers, and she has found that it has taken some time to establish her role as a supervisor and to develop rapport with all those with whom she works.
>
> Activities which loom large in her time allocation are individual conferences, classroom visits, inservice workshops, curriculum committee work, distributing materials, and attending meetings of professional groups. She thinks it would be better to spend less time in classroom visits and in clerical work and more time with parent and citizen's groups; in writing, reading, and research; in arranging teacher visitations; in working with textbook committees; and in having some part in teacher placement.
>
> Her job was originally defined by the county superintendent; but as her role has changed, her job has changed and executive heads, teachers, and principals have participated in defining her job. They also participate in the evaluation of her work. She feels that evaluation should be based on reports as to her helpfulness to the teachers and staff, improvement in human relationships, and indications of child growth, although they seem now to be based on more limited criteria.
>
> Her work is mostly on "building" and single teacher problems. She feels that her relationships are such that, after rapport has been established, she can go to schools as she is needed or on invitation and act as leader, resource person, and confidante.
>
> Additional feelings about her work and her problems are communicated best by her own verbatim comments:
>
> *My greatest problems arose at first from my philosophy. I didn't feel free to work. Now my philosophy is accepted by my superintendent and I feel much more secure. Nothing in my training had prepared me for this.*
>
> *Another problem has developed because of a lack of a good place to work. Whenever I need to think creatively, do research, or write, I have no place but home where I can do it. That means I work at night —often.*

[14] Ibid., p. 15–16.

I have enjoyed much freedom. I have not been tied to a planned, fixed visitation schedule; I am able to attend professional meetings; and I find my work the most challenging and interesting of any I have ever tried.

After completing the checklist with many comments, this supervisor attended a meeting as described below and reflects the feelings attendant upon attaining status and cooperation for a program of action.

Since completing this I'd like to report that I attended our Superintendent's Executive Head's Meeting on invitation, Tuesday. I had charge of discussion from 10:15 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. A wonderful meeting, I believe, for all of us. We planned, discussed, and decided to meet again.

1. *We worked on grouping in grades 4, 5, and 6.*
2. *We planned and arranged for released time for a curriculum committee.*
3. *We planned further testing.*

Furthermore, we considered for some time two problem areas:

1. *What can we do about science and health teaching?*
2. *How best to get action on things that executive heads, the superintendent, and I see need to be done.*

More actual progress, as I see supervision really functioning, was made yesterday in this session than has been made in the previous time I have been on the job. However, it may be that we all had to mature a little to work up to this.

The Helping Relationship.—There appears to be general agreement that a helping relationship is important to success in many types of situations that involve human relations. Effective supervision has been defined as a helping or consultant type of service. What a helping relationship involves, however, poses many questions difficult to answer. One does not become an effective helper by desire alone even though theoretically his sources of information in appropriate fields may appear to be adequate.

Robert Bills[15] points out that certain definable conditions must exist in a relationship in order that the person or persons being helped will move toward what he calls "greater openness to their experience." The task of education, says Bills, is to provide a person with opportunity for a breadth of experience and to do this in such a way that the experience will be personally meaningful and readily available when it is needed by him. If the proposed experience is not recognized as meaningful or if the individual feels threatened by it, he will move farther away from his experience, from "openness" to "closedness."

[15] Robert E. Bills, "Education Is Human Relations," *New Insights and the Curriculum*, 1963 ASCD Yearbook. Washington: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1963, p. 176.

Rogers[16] has shown that it is possible to arrange all people along a personality continuum which extends from openness to closedness to experience. Another way of saying this, says Bills, is that the continuum, which is also called a process continuum, extends from a point of *stasis,* wherein a person is closed to new as well as past experience, to a condition of *process,* wherein a person has available to him the experience of his past and also is able to incorporate new experience and to revise old meanings with a minimum of effort.

Barrett-Lennard's[17] work indicates that a person is helped to move toward openness to his experience when the helper is congruent in the relationship, empathetic in his understanding, positive and unconditional in his regard, and willing to share himself as a person with the person being helped.

Conclusions of this nature result mostly from studies in psychotherapy, but it seems that they are equally applicable to persons in school situations. A few such studies are identified by Bills:[18]

> In one study, pairs of teachers in grades three through six were selected for study of attitudes toward self and others. Each pair of teachers included one selected on the basis of problem description as being more open to his experience and one who was less open to his experience. The pupils of these teachers were tested for attitudes toward self and others. The data showed that the more open the teacher, the more positive were the attitudes the boys and girls held toward themselves. Clearly, the process characteristics of the teachers were influencing the personal characteristics of the pupils.
>
> In another study we were concerned with the questions: Do open teachers form a different quality of relationship with their students? and Do open teachers have a different approach to teaching? The conclusions were: The more open a teacher, the more he provides a classroom situation in which students can grow toward openness.

Robert Cummins[19] studied student and teacher attitudes toward self and others and the role of concepts of teachers as a function of the qualities they perceived in their principals. The conclusion was that the more democratic the principal was perceived as being, the more positive were the students' and teachers' attitude toward self and others, and the more facilitating and educing were the role

[16] Carl R. Rogers, "The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change," *Journal of Consulting Psychology,* 21: 95–103, 1957; and also, "A Process Conception of Psychologist," 13: 142–149, 1958.

[17] G. T. Barrett-Lennard. "Dimensions of Perceived Therapist Response Related to Therapeutic Change," Chicago: University of Chicago, 1959. Unpublished doctoral dissertation.

[18] Bills, op. cit., p. 178.

[19] Robert E. Cummins. "An Evaluative Study of Certain Teacher Perceptions Related to Professional Growth," Auburn, Ala.: Auburn University, 1957. Unpublished doctoral dissertation.

descriptions given by the teachers. To a significant degree, the teachers and the students reflected their perceptions of the principals.

Relative to the studies identified above and their implications, Robert Bills[20] says:

> Teachers with qualities of openness can be closed to their experience by the nature of the administrative and supervisory relationships they encounter. Education has sought to establish administrative and supervisory relationships on the grounds that they are consistent with the society in which we live and therefore "good." This, obviously, is a desirable goal. But democratic relationships are necessary in order that teachers may become or remain open to their experience and thus may effectively aid the education of boys and girls. Boys and girls treated in this way will have the creative intelligence needed to continue to modify our society and to continue its growth and development. If we are to free the intelligence of teachers and, through them, the intelligence of boys and girls, we must provide for the openness of teachers in the relationships of important "other" people with them.

This discussion has implications for the ways in which administrators and supervisors work with teachers and for the ways teachers work with pupils to promote their openness. Regardless of whether an attempt is made to help supervisors, teachers, or pupils, the principles seem to be the same.

Evidence found through the studies reported supports the following conclusions:

1. Good supervision is a consultant, cooperative, and leadership service which helps schools do their work better.
2. Supervision is most effective in helping to provide better learning situations for pupils when:
   (a) It contributes significantly to the solution of problems considered important by the teachers as well as the supervisors.
   (b) The teachers and others involved help decide what the supervisory service should be.
   (c) Supervisors are successful in providing an atmosphere of acceptance, support, and understanding.
   (d) Supervisors are successful in helping schools obtain, provide, interpret, and apply knowledge needed to facilitate progress toward the accomplishment of educational objectives.

[20] Bills, op. cit., p. 181–182.

3. Effective supervision helps teachers increase their knowledge and understanding of children, which in turn makes a difference in what teachers can do to help pupils achieve their best.

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Chapter V

ON THE ROAD AHEAD

PROVIDING ENOUGH OF THE KIND OF SUPERVISION which contributes significantly to the improvement of learning situations for approximately 15 million rural children and youth (11 million nonfarm, 4 million rural farm)[1] is a tremendous task. Although much has been done, much more needs to be done. However, the road ahead has a number of bright spots.

Number of Supervisors Increasing

For a number of reasons, there can be no clear-cut line which separates rural and urban supervisors. Some school systems, for example, may serve rural and city children; in such instances the school supervisors may serve both. Although the U.S. Bureau of the Census classifies living residences of children into categories—urban, rural farm and rural nonfarm, school attendance areas are not so classified. Consequently, an accurate count of rural supervisors is difficult.

However, one source of information on the number of supervisors serving rural schools is directories prepared by State departments of education. Lists of county[2] school supervisors reported in State department directories indicate that the number of supervisors over the years has increased. A summary report follows:[3]

> Between 1944 and 1964, the number of county (or similar unit) supervisors in the United States increased from 836 to approximately 3,200. The greatest increase in number occur-

[1] U.S. Bureau of the Census. Summary, *Population Characteristics, 1960*, Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office table 155, p. 1–349 to 1–352.

[2] The word county refers to any unit of administration which is similar to the county—parish, union, or district; intermediate is a unit of administration between the local district and the State.

[3] Jane Franseth. "Status of County School Supervision in 1962–63." Washington: Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1964 (unpublished data).

red in the following States: Florida, from 37 to 190; Georgia, from 25 to 191; Kentucky, from 56 to 163; Louisiana, from 64 to 142; Maryland, from 26 to 190; North Carolina, from 8 to 210; Ohio, from 18 to 160; Virginia, from 89 to 267; and West Virginia, from 0 to 59.

Supervisory services are now available to all or almost all schools in the following States: California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, New Jersey, North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia. The following States have few if any supervisors serving rural schools, supervision of instruction limited to help that is provided by the school administrators: Arizona, Kansas, Maine, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming.

In some States supervisory services are provided by county or intermediate unit offices, and are generally available to all schools in the area served.

Significant is a trend to provide increasingly more supervisory and specialized services to schools through an enlarged central office staff under the direction of a county or intermediate unit superintendent of schools. In a growing number of rural situations, this expansion is the result of school district reorganization.[4] Larger districts, an outcome of reorganization, usually have a potential for more effectively providing the scope and quality of services required in a modern program than is possible in small districts. It appears certain that the number of supervisors and specialized personnel will continue to increase.

Certification Standards Improving[5]

Although all States require specific preparation for school administrators, some States do not differentiate between certification for school administration and certification for school supervision. In most situations, however, requirements for an administrative certificate also include some preparation for instructional leadership. Seventy-two percent of the States issue supervisory as well as administrative certificates.

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[4] American Association of School Administrators and Department of Rural Education. "Trends May Be Apparent," *School District Organization—A Journey That Must Not End.* Washington: National Education Association, 1962, p. 2–3.

[5] Based on information reported by Earl Armstrong and T. M. Stinnett. *A Manual on Certification Requirements for School Personnel in the United States.* Washington: National Education Association, 1964.

In almost all States the minimum requirement for school administrators is at least a master's degree. In 18 of the States that issue supervisory certificates, the minimum requirement is at least a master's degree; in 13 States, the minimum is at least a bachelor's degree.

In addition to the academic requirements for certification, most States also require appropriate professional preparation for certification of administrators and/or supervisors.[6]

Attempts To Evaluate Increasing

As indicated in the previous chapter, attempts to appraise the effectiveness of supervision are increasing. Continuous interest and development in methods of evaluation and improving practice as a result of findings are encouraging signs.

Programs for Educating Supervisors Improving

How to improve supervision is a topic discussed in institutes[7] and work conferences[8] throughout the Nation. Continuous group study of their own problems on local, State, regional, and national levels is helping supervisors to improve the quality of the services they provide. The fact that so many supervisors are critically examining their own roles and practices promises continuous improvement in the quality of instructional leadership.

Coordinated study and guided intern programs in educational leadership for a period of one or more years are offered throughout the Nation. Carefully designed programs of study[9] are provided by a growing number of universities and colleges in cooperation with State departments of education. These are aimed specifically at meeting the needs of supervisors, and the participants usually have a part in deciding what their experiences should be. Growing in number and quality are programs[10] of inservice education of supervisors and other school personnel.

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[6] Ibid.

[7] Alexander Frazier, ed. *Freeing Capacity To Learn*, Report of Fourth Curriculum Research Institute sponsored by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Washington: The Association, NEA, 1960.

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[10] William H. Wagoner. *Staff Development—An Emerging Function for Schools*. Washington: Department of Rural Education, NEA, 1964, 14 p.

Through these and other efforts, supervisors will continue to improve the education of children in rural schools.

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